

INTRODUCTION

The legal order of the Czech Republic has recently been in a rather difficult situation. Although the process of its transformation, i.e., its return to a standard democratic system, started in 1989, it has not yet come to its termination. The present shape of the legal order takes the form of recodifications that have been drafted and already partly implemented (cf. the Labour Code) in almost all areas of private law, criminal law, and procedural administrative law. This internal process is simultaneously confronted, on the supranational level, with the needs of a further harmonization of the Czech legal order with EC/EU law, while facing the challenges of major projects of unification as well as the need to react to the realities of global developments with the aim of reducing its risks.

The necessity of reacting to the requirements which are placed on the development of law and which were faster in the 1990s than the basic and applied research in law, led to a group of projects devoted to the research of Czech law concerning its determinants and developmental needs.

Among the significant projects for dealing with the situation of Czech law in the current developmental stage – mainly in the context of the entry of the Czech Republic into the EU and the effect of this historic step on the Czech legal order and the individual subparts of its system – consists of a five-year research project entitled “European Context of the Development of Czech Law after 2004”. This is a broad project of basic research in the field of law, based on the team cooperation of both experienced and young, gifted researches from the Czech Republic and abroad, who are involved in various European research initiatives and projects. The research project, started in 2005 and centered at the Faculty of Law, Masaryk University in Brno, has gone through several stages, which aimed:

- to process and analyze, both on the general level and on particular topics, the situation in the field of

Czech law arising as a result of the accession of the Czech Republic to the EU;

- to prepare a theoretical and methodological conception for dealing with the impact which the accession of the Czech Republic to the EU has had on Czech law as a whole.

The results of the previous stages of the research project were published in monographs, journal articles, and studies, as well as proceedings from conferences, seminars, and workshops. Some of the results were also published in a concise form in the English version of the journal *Časopis pro právní vědu a praxi* – volume IV/2006, published by the Faculty of Law, Masaryk University.

At present, the outcomes of another stage of the research project have become available: these mainly concern the formulation of conceptual solutions to the impacts of the accession of the Czech Republic to the EU, as they are discussed in the individual topics of the research project.

For the benefit of basic legal research as well as the wider community of lawyers, the current issue of the journal *Časopis pro právní vědu a praxi*, published by the Faculty of Law, Masaryk University, presents a major part of the results of the research project from 2006 to 2008. Further results of the team are provided in special volumes of the research project (published annually by the Faculty of Law), as well as in proceedings, monographs, articles, and studies of particular sub-teams and individual researchers. The final outcomes of the research project will be published in a new series of monographs by the Faculty of Law, Masaryk University.

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